sang, "When the blood of Jews spurts from your knife. . . ."

New elections were announced for March 5. Hitler's cabinet was based originally on the coalition of the Nazis with other right-wing parties. Very soon, however, the moderates were removed or had resigned, and the Nazis remained the sole masters of the central and Prussian governments. The fourteen years of the Republic were officially declared the Era of Treason. Newspapers were forbidden to publish information or articles contrary to the designs of the new government and were forced to carry everything submitted by the authorities. These regulations were officially described as the "co-ordination" (*Gleichschaltung*) of the press.

The Republic had ceased to exist.

THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD REICH

Our board met every other day, mainly to exchange information. The reports were brief, matter-of-fact. Hitler was touring the country, cursing the Republic, the Socialists, and, above all, the Jews, promising everything to all Germans. Göring was directing the Brown Shirts. The police, purged of republican officers, were ordered to support local patriotic organizations, shoot first, and investigate thereafter. A wave of terror rolled through the country—assaults on Socialists, Jewish pogroms. Mobs raided the offices of the S-D newspapers and the Reichsbanner. On February 25, Göring issued an order making the Brown Shirts an auxiliary police force.

Late in the evening of February 27, the Reichstag building was set on fire. This was one of most dramatic and least mysterious events of the Nazi revolution.[7] The over-ornate gilded structure, built with money France had been forced to pay to Prussia after the war of 1871 and originally conceived as a monument to Prussian militarism, had become the symbol of parliamentarism in Germany. Its burning symbolized the end of the Republic. While the Reichstag was still smoldering, the government issued a declaration accusing the Communists of arson and suspending all Communist and Socialist newspapers. Göring's police and the Brown Shirts raided the apartments of Communists, their sympathizers, S-D leaders, and intellectuals

[7] Either the Nazis or the Communists could have committed the crime. If the Communists had beaten Hitler, they would probably have burned the building and then accused the Nazis of arson. As things stood in February, 1933, the Communists were interested in preserving the Reichstag as a legal cover for their further work, and Hitler's gang was interested in destroying it as a hateful symbol. The fact that the arsonists entered the closed and tightly guarded building through a tunnel connecting it with the residence of Göring across the street left no doubt about the origin of the crime.